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Homes for the Holidays

Fonthill United Church music director Bill Outred plays a selection of carols during the congregation's Homes for the Holidays Christmas House Tour, Saturday. Well more than 400 people toured the church and six Pelham homes each decorated by a local designer. See story on page 2.

GREG FURMINGER/STAFF PHOTO

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UPFRONT

HOMES FOR THE HOLIDAYS: A glimpse into Christmas

'This is where I want to spend Christmas'

GREG FURMINGER
QMI Agency Niagara

In this case, there's no place like someone else's home for the holidays.

"This is where I want to spend Christmas," Betty Thomas quipped as she took in the Homes for the Holidays Christmas House tour with Welland neighbour Denice Mantesso.

The two women have made it a tradition of sorts to partake in the annual fundraiser presented by and to benefit Fonthill United Church.

"It's a good day out with friends. It's a fun morning, a fun day," Thomas said as the pair toured 17 Vista Dr. in Fonthill.

"This is our favourite," Mantesso said of the home, one of six that were showcased Saturday, as well as the church.

"It's the scent," she explained as a cinnamon concoction simmered on the kitchen stove. "It smells like the season."

Clara Davis, who operates a seasonal home business called Expressions of Home, owns the two-storey home with husband Don. She also decorated the rooms with her floral creations that were accented by the woodworking skills of her husband.

She had wanted to participate in the tour in previous years, and this was the first time it fit into her schedule.

She was overwhelmed by the turnout.

"I couldn't believe how many people were waiting to get in. There was a lineup," she said.

"It's been amazing. I've met so many wonderful people."

While Davis volunteered her home, tour co-ordinator Carolyn van der Sluis typically prefers to make random knocks at people's doors in search of venues, each to be temporarily decked out by a local decorator.

"If you're house proud, home proud — those are the ones saying yes," she said of participants.

Van der Sluis spoke as several dozen people were laughing over a break with scones and coffee in the church basement.

"Everybody's in the spirit. I think this is one of the first Christmas events of the season."

Well more than 400 people paid $20 a ticket to tour the "stunningly decorated" homes at their leisure, including visitors from as far as Toronto and Coburg.

Proceeds from the fundraiser will be applied to programs that aid the church and the community.

Said van der Sluis, "This will be our best year."

greg.furminger@sunmedia.ca
Twitter: @GregAtTheTrib

PARTICIPATING DECORATORS

Jackie Cornwall of Vermeer's Garden Centre and Flower Shop

Deborah Sourwine of Cox Home Furniture

Cathy Boggio of Log Cabin Gift Shoppe

Lise Daniel of Le Village

Clara Davis of Expressions of Home

Sandy Alexander of Off the Wall Home Decor and Design, with Bowring's support

Renita Damm-Kiers of J&J Floral Expressions

Ben and Marion Damm of Floral Expressions

PHOTOS BY GREG FURMINGER/QMI AGENCY NIAGARA

Visitors tour the Vista Dr. home of decorator Clara Davis during Fonthill United Church's Homes for the Holidays Christmas House Tour, Saturday. Well more than 400 people toured the church and six Pelham homes each decorated by a local designer.

The Vista Dr. home of Fonthill decorator Clara Davis.

Visitors arrive at the Vista Dr. home of decorator Clara Davis during Fonthill United Church's Homes for the Holidays Christmas House Tour, Saturday. Well more than 400 people toured the church and six Pelham homes each decorated by a local designer.

LOCALNEWS

■ **SALVATION ARMY:** Christian organization can't afford to pay help while helping the less fortunate

Salvation sought in kettle volunteers

GREG FURMINGER
QMI Agency Niagara

The Salvation Army needs salvation itself as it rolls out its iconic Christmas Kettle Campaign.

Unable to any longer pay people to jingle bells at kettles set up at shopping malls and grocery stores, as minimum wage continues to escalate, the Welland and Port Colborne unit is looking for several more volunteers so that the donations it does receive this season end up supporting the people who most need help.

"Over the past years, we've paid more people than we wanted to," said executive director Greg Warkentin, adding they were far greater in number than the people who were content with just giving of their time to help others.

He said word got out about the paid help as volunteer numbers dwindled — something that may make potential donors reconsider dropping a buck or two, or more, into a kettle.

The local unit has more than a thousand two-hour slots to fill at 10 kettle locations in Welland, four in Port Colborne and one in Pelham.

Because of the shortage of volunteers, Warkentin said, it may be looking at concentrating its fundraising efforts Thursdays to Saturdays.

"We are very pleased with tbe volunteers who have come out already well before the 'Christmas season,'" he said.

As of Saturday morning, 95 slots had been filled, said area kettle co-ordinator MistyAnn McMillan.

The Welland-Port Colborne campaign kicked off Saturday morning at Seaway Mall with an 18-piece brass band from the Salvation Army Church in Cambridge.

It's Welland goal this year is again $80,000 — and Warkentin is excited that a new recruit making cold calls will be able to get support not only for reaching that figure but attracting help.

Last year Welland raised about $78,000 of an $80,000 target.

Warkentin believes the local 2013 figures may have come up short because people don't carry cash like they used to, relying instead on debit and charge cards when shopping.

Still, faithful Salvation Army supporters continue to come by its office or mail in their support.

In Welland, donations support such Salvation Army programs as the Niagara Mobile Outreach Unit, its food bank at Seaway Mall and those tied to Christmas. Its food bank last year fed 8,000 people and there's a growing demand.

"The money you put in that kettle stays in the community where the kettle is," Warkentin said.

"This is a national campaign that stays local."

Last year The Salvation Army in St. Catharines, which also represents Thorold and Niagara-on-the-Lake, reported raising $230,000 of a $280,000 goal, a figure that was reached in 2012.

Fort Erie — also overseen by Warkentin — met its $55,000 goal in 2013, while Salvation Army Niagara Orchard Community Church in Niagara Falls met its $85,000 target.

In its 123rd year, in 2013 the Christmas Kettle Campaign nationally collected more than $21 million in donations at more tban 2,000 kettle locations — up 2% from 2012, according to the Christian organization's Canadian website.

Donors can also support The Salvation Army through FilltheKettle.com, which allows individuals to host their own Christmas Kettle online, and ask friends and family to give. Almost $144,000 was raised that way nationally last year.

– with QMI Agency Niagara files

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GREG FURMINGER/STAFF PHOTO

Dan Millar, area public relations director for The Salvation Army, welcomes donations during the launch of the local Christmas Kettle Campaign, Saturday at Seaway Mall.

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COMMENT

Transitioning to a new town council

DAVE AUGUSTYN
For PelhamNews

With our last meeting of the 2010-14 town council term on Nov. 17, some people have asked me about our transition to a new 2014-18 council.

As a result of the municipal election on Oct. 27, our new council will be very similar to our current council; myself and five councillors — Gary Accursi, John Durley, Catherine King, Peter Papp and Richard Ryblak — were re-elected and will return.

Only one new person — Marvin Junkin — was newly elected, so it will be important to include his ideas and efforts into the new council.

Because it helps to know each other socially as we work together closely on your behalf, we will gather together for a breakfast this week. Then, as is a tradition in Pelham, council will meet socially with department beads at a dinner prior to Christmas, as well as have a chance to participate in the staff Christmas party in mid-December.

But, predominately, the transition will include much work. Councillors-elect will participate in an orientation session on Nov. 24 to learn about the role of council, meeting protocols, conflict of interest requirements, council's code of conduct, the town's accessibility standards, and our budget process and overview.

Your new council will officially make our declaration of office at our Inaugural meeting on Monday, Dec. 1, starting 6:30 p.m. at Old Pelham Town Hall, Ridgeville. Not only will this special meeting officially begin our public service of your council, it will also be the first event in the newly revitalized facility. All are welcome, so please join us.

On Dec. 3 your new council will work together to develop a strategic plan for the town. We will use this opportunity to not only focus council on key strategic goals for the next four years (and beyond), but we will also include information, opinions, and ideas from the recent election.

On Monday, Dec. 8, at 6:30 p.m. in council chambers, your new council wants to hear from you directly with ideas and suggestions about what we should include or not include in the 2015 town budget and future budgets. All are welcome to this public meeting. (You can also provide a written submission to ourbudget@pelham.ca or at town hall.)

So that your new council better understands its fiduciary responsibilities, we will learn about the town's insurance coverage, and receive a legal briefing and a human resources overview on Dec. 10.

We will hold our first full council and committee-of-the-whole meeting on Dec. 15. Our committee meeting will include presentations by department directors and a discussion of our 2015 water and wastewater budgets.

This is an exciting time. I look forward to working together with our new council and our community to continue to improve our town.

You may contact Mayor Dave at mayordave@pelham.ca or read past columns at www.pelhammayordave.blogspot.com.

Shipwrecks — C. de Baillon

SKIP GILLHAM
For QMI Agency Niagara

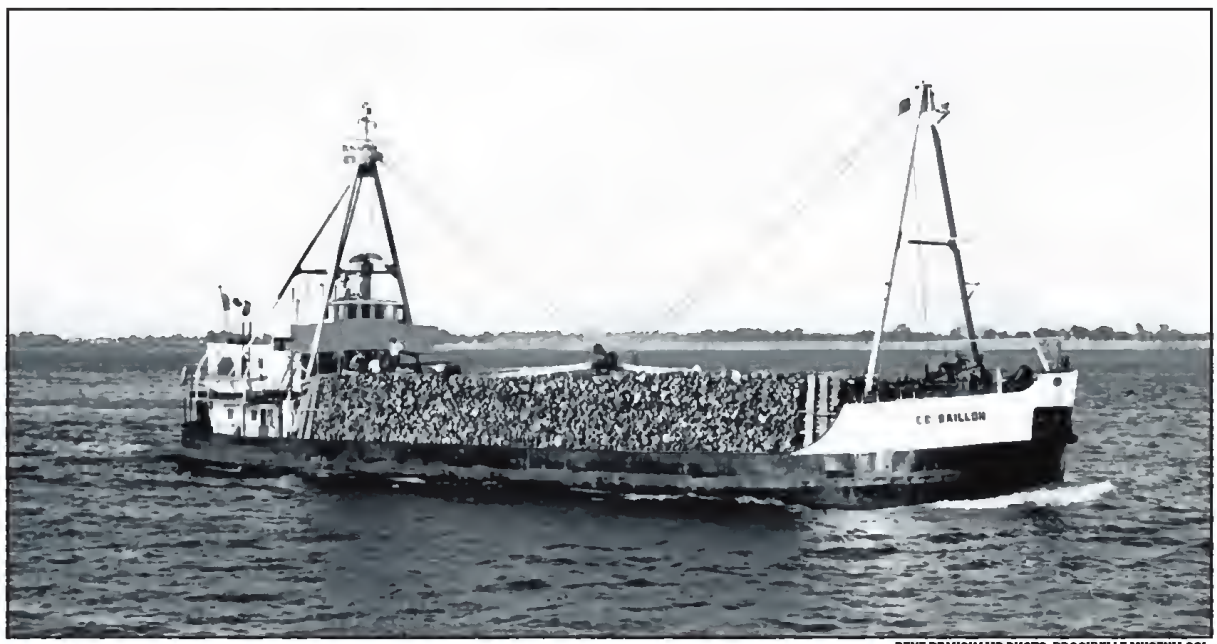
In the early years of the St. Lawrence Seaway, small wooden as well as steel hulled ships from Quebec would come to the Great Lakes with cargos of pulpwood. One of these sailed for less than a year before becoming a total loss.

The vessel had been built at Montreal in 1928 and joined the Donnacona Paper Co. as *Donnacona No. 2*. The 44.23-metre-long vessel served the owners carrying pulpwood on a route between the St. Lawrence River communities of Sault au Mouton and Donnacona.

The ship was repowered in 1942 with a new 320 brake horsepower engine and then the hull was rebuilt in 1954 and '55.

Donnacona No. 2 was sold to the St. Simeon Navigation Co. in 1959 and renamed *Miron C.* It waited a few years before coming into the Great Lakes but was an inland visitor in 1965 and again in 1967.

Another sale early in 1971 led to a new name of *C. de Baillon* and the ship is shown back on the Great Lakes in a photo by Alfred Sagon-King.



RENE BEAUCHAMP PHOTO, BROCKVILLE MUSEUM COL.

Pictured is the C. de Baillon.

Before the year was out, *C. de Baillon* was a total loss. It was wrecked by going aground at Mont Louis on Nov. 15, 1971, and repairs could not be justified. As a result, the vessel was broken up for scrap.

Its running mate, *Donnacona No. 3* has fared much better. At last count it had six subsequent names and was still sailing under the flag of Honduras as *Carlos Felipe* as late as 2003.

ONLINE Get breaking news as it happens. www.pelhamnews.ca

LOCALNEWS

■ **HEALTH CARE:** Campaign accepting sign-ups for Friday rally at Queen's Park

Get on board to save Welland hospital

GREG FURMINGER
QMI Agency Niagara

Mary Montpetit was left disappointed by the reaction at front doors when she was circulating flyers for the campaign to save Welland hospital.

Most people were disinterested.

Montpetit, a mother who doesn't drive, however, is very concerned about what could happen if Welland's hospital shuts down, replaced by a new, bigger facility on Montrose Rd. in Niagara Falls.

"It's scary. We need our hospital," she said, concerned about the elderly, the ill and others like her who don't have a licence or vehicle to get to emergency care.

Montpetit was at Welland Farmers' Market Saturday morning drumming up support for a bus trip to Queen's Park this coming Friday, where Welland hospital boosters will assemble with an anticipated field of 10,000 Ontarians worried, too, about hospital cuts and closures in their communities.

Terry Nicholls, secretary of the south Niagara unit of Council of Canadians, called the trip "Action 1" of the Save Welland Hospital campaign.

GET ON THE BUS

The coach bus — a second if needed — will leave the Welland market Friday at 9 a.m., arriving at Queen's Park for the noon rally.

Buses leave Toronto at 2:30 p.m. to return to the market.

To sign up, contact Niagara Health Coalition co-chair Sue Hotte at 905-932-1646 or e-mail suehotte@yahoo.ca.

"It's just insane that we won't have a hospital here," he said.

The provincial government is spending millions of dollars to look into the Niagara Falls site that would also replace hospitals in Port Colborne, Fort Erie, Niagara Falls and Niagara-on-the-Lake, but so far has not committed to building a new hospital for "south Niagara."

If needed, a second bus will be chartered to leave from the market square at 9 a.m. on the day of the Toronto rally. The Welland trip has financial support from Nicholl's' council plus Niagara Regional Labour Council, Ontario Health Coalition and Niagara Health Coalition.

In a sea of other demonstrators, Nicholls said he hopes that everyone representing Welland Friday will have brought placards with them that show support and need for the Rose City hospital.

He said residents need to be more involved.

"I think people have lost confidence in political leadership, which is why this has to be a citizen movement."

Earlier this month, more than a hundred people packed Welland's civic square to learn more about the grass roots effort.

It was there that Ontario Health Coalition's Natalie Mehra said that in her 14 years with the organization she has never seen an area where cuts are as severe as those proposed for Niagara. Including Welland's population and catchment areas, close to 100,000 people rely on the Welland Hospital.

"Nowhere in this country are they closing hospitals in towns of 50,000 people. It's unheard of. It's completely unacceptable," she said.

greg.furminger@sunmedia.ca
Twitter: @GregAtTheTrib

GREG FURMINGER/STAFF PHOTO
Terry Nicholls, secretary of the local branch of the Council of Canadians, is stressing the importance of fighting for the preservation of Welland hospital. He is pictured at Welland Farmers' Market Saturday, where a sign-up sheet was available for people wanting to take part in Friday's bus trip to Queen's Park, where thousands of people from across Ontario while be demonstrating in support of hospital services.

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Canada's patriotism is emerging stronger

BRIAN BATY
For PelhamNews

This year was a special year for the celebration of Remembrance Day following the loss of two lives on Canadian soil.

My words at this year's ceremony at the Fonthill legion branch attempted to link back to the War of 1812 to demonstrate its significance to our lives, and ended with a poem written by a veteran who recently served in Afghanistan.

The peace treaty, The Treaty of Ghent, was signed on Christmas Eve in 1814. Since then we have experienced 200 years of peace with the United States of America.

The Niagara River separates us from our American neighbours but there is a greater gap between us in our sense of citizenship and our display of patriotism. It is not that one is right and one is wrong; it is not that one is better than the other; we are just different.

American patriotism seems always to be on a grand scale. Whether it is their movies, their press coverage or their parades and ceremonies, there is a broad statement of Americanism; flags waving, hands over hearts and bold pronouncements of loyalty.

We, as Canadians, seem at first to be far more reserved. Yes, we have our flag, some fifty years old, and we have grown to admire its symbol in sporting events, at parades and, most of all in our respect for the men and women of our armed forces, past and present. But, it is in recent years, through the cultural development of the Highway of Heroes that we have shown our patriotism which is displayed as each soldier is repatriated to their hometown. We have all seen still pictures or television shots of overpasses filled with Canadians paying respect to those that bave fallen but also to those who serve. The latest television exposure of this phenomenon was the return of Cpl. Nathan Cirillo to his home in Hamilton.

In March 2009 I had the experience of watching firsthand the development of such a display of patriotism. I was en route with my grandson to a sporting event in Toronto. As we made our way down Victoria Ave., we saw a small group of people gathering on the overpass to the QEW with a few flags flying. My grandson in the back asked if it was a parade. I told him that it was not a parade but that people were gathering to show respect for a soldier from Port Colborne, Cpl. Tyler Crooks who was being returned to Port Colborne for his burial. He had been killed a few days earlier outside Kandahar City in Afghanitan on his birthday.

As it turned out, this early gathering of citizens was to expand on every overpass to Port Colborne. By the time we reached the Beamsville overpass, it was full. As we approached the Grimsby overpasses, they were full, too. As we approached the Casablanca overpass, it was full and people began lining up shoulder to shoulder on the north and south service roads. As we approached Fifty Rd. and Fruitland Rd., not only were the overpasses full but the service roads were as well.

Then we saw the approaching lights of the funeral cortege. I put on the hazard lights and started to pull over to the side. So did all the other vehicles on the road. I wondered what American tourists and truck drivers thought about Canadians that day. For me it was the most profound statement of patriotism that I have ever witnessed and will never forget.

There were no church bells tolling nor sirens ringing to summon the crowds that day. Nor did the hundreds of citizens at this year's Remembrance Day ceremony at the Fonthill legion hall receive personal invitations to the event. We come together as citizens to quietly pay our respect for those who served, those who serve and the freedom of being a Canadian.

Brian Baty is a regional councillor for Pelham; brian.baty@niagararegion.ca

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Residents are invited to participate in our upcoming open house to provide input for the 2015 Town of Pelham capital and operating budgets!

Monday, December 8, 2014 @ 6:30 pm
Pelham Council Chamber at Town Hall (20 Pelham Town Square in Fonthill)

Can't make it to the open house? Send us your suggestions to
ourbudget@pelham.ca

visit pelham.ca for more information

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Wednesday, November 26 7:30 pm – 8:30 pm
Thursday, November 27 10:00 am – 11:00 am

Drop in and try any session for $6 or purchase your 10 + 2 bonus passes for $60. For more info on any Zumba classes, contact 905-892-2607 x329.

Walking Club - Everyone is welcome! – November 25 & 27

Interested in joining a Walking Club? Then join ours! Tuesdays at Pelham Arena from 9-10 am and Thursdays at Fonthill Bandshell from 9-10:30 am. For more information, please contact (905) 892-2607 ext. 329.

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COMMUNITY EVENTS & NEWS

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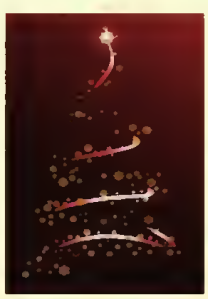
Visit pelham.ca for application details and to **apply by Thursday, November 27, 2014**. For more information, please contact the Town Clerk at nbozzato@pelham.ca or (905) 892-2607 ext. 315.

Santa Claus Parade Applications – now available at Town Hall or online at pelham.ca

Outdoor Christmas Market Vendor Applications – now available at Town Hall or online at pelham.ca

CHRISTMAS IN PELHAM
November 5, 2014 – January 4, 2015

Get ready for the holidays. Check out these great upcoming events around Town and watch for more each week!



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Temperanceville Historic Display – December 1 to January 5 – Peace Park, Fonthill
Presented by the Rotary Club of Fonthill.

Lessons, Carols & Cookies – December 3, 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm
At Fonthill United Church, 42 Church Hill, Fonthill.

LOCALNEWS

■ **CLOSEUP:** There are approximately 35 homeless veterans in Niagara

Another fight for veterans

RAY SPITERI
QMI Agency Niagara

When Niagara resident James Scott came home after serving three years in Bosnia, he didn't expect to be treated like a hero.

He also didn't expect to be nearly homeless.

Scott, who was in Bosnia from 1991 to 1993, split from his wife and "spent a few years couch surfing with friends."

As he struggled to get back on his feet, Scott said Royal Canadian Legion Branch 479 in Niagara Falls was there for him.

"They brought me food when I needed it, they took care of some of my bills, they brought me in, I'm now sergeant-at-arms there. I've also had a lot of help from Veterans Affairs."

According to the legion, there are approximately 35 homeless veterans in Niagara.

"At times, it's still hard for me," says Scott. "I have good days and I have bad days. It's hard for (struggling veterans) to come forward because of their own personal pride. Some of them just don't want to be helped, they just refuse."

Others might not know help is available.

"I didn't know a lot about it myself until the legion came along and took care of things for me, got me pointed in the right direction."

Louis Frenette, a service officer with Branch 479 who also looks after 17 legions from Grimsby to Fort Erie, says he would describe a homeless veteran as someone who is either "living under the bridges," or someone who has "absolutely nothing left after their rent and their food is paid."

Branch 479 started looking into the issue 2 1/2 years ago and discovered there was no homeless shelter for men in Niagara Falls.

"We couldn't understand why there's no homeless shelter for men, let alone veterans. I started inquiring around with the branches that we deal with, asked a few questions and we come to find out that we have approximately 35 veterans that are homeless."

Frenette, who runs the Veterans Resource Centre at the Spring St. legion, says he has dealt with veterans who simply need the bare essentials to others who are suicidal.

He says most of the veterans in need served in Afghanistan or are peace-time soldiers. They could be anywhere from 20 years old and up.

"Most of them have fallen through the cracks. They've given up on the government to give them a helping hand because it's so hard, some of them are tired of applying (for assistance). They've been shuffled down ... and it just gets to the point where they say, 'I have had enough' and they just take off on their own."

Frenette says the way he understands it, the federal government has separate classifications for veterans when it comes to pay, depending on which conflict they've been a part of.

"To me, the government is wrong because they're classifying war. War is war, I don't care how you look at it ... a veteran is a veteran."

Frenette says he also disagrees with the federal government replacing veteran pensions with lump-sum payments.

For decades, an injured war veteran from Canada received a pension for life. But after the New Veterans Charter was implemented eight years ago, monthly disability payments were replaced with an option to get a one-time settlement.

"You give a 23-year-old $280,000 when he comes out of three tours in Afghanistan, what is he going to do?" asks Frenette. "He's going to go on the longest, the nicest vacation, he's going to come back and buy the biggest vehicle that he can possibly have and then he's going to party the rest of what's left.

"To my way of thinking, as a veteran, that's wrong. The money should be kept back, it should be involved in a fund where he can draw a monthly pension."

Veterans Affairs did not respond to specific questions related to this feature as of deadline.

Continued on next page

MIKE DIBATTISTA/QMI AGENCY NIAGARA

Niagara resident James Scott credits Royal Canadian Legion Branch 479 and Veterans Affairs for helping him through a difficult period of his life after he returned home from Bosnia.

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LOCALNEWS

■ **CLOSEUP:** There are approximately 35 homeless veterans in Niagara

Another fight for veterans

From previous page

Instead, the ministry referred this reporter to its website (www.veterans.gc.ca), which states the government provides a tax-free disability payment of up to $298,587 to veterans, based on the extent of their disability.

Veterans can choose between three payment options: a lump-sum payment, an annual installment over the number of years of a veteran's choosing or a combination of the two options.

Veterans may also be eligible for a number of monthly financial supports to compensate for the economic impact of an injury or illness, including a guarantee that the monthly income of recipients will not fall below 75% of their pre-release military salary.

In 2011, the government enhanced the Earnings Loss Benefit to ensure a total pre-tax income of at least $42,400 a year, regardless of the salary a soldier was earning while in the Armed Forces.

There are additional income supports, clothing allowances and a one-time supplementary retirement benefit, payable at age 65, "to recognize the reduced ability of injured and ill veterans to put money aside in a private pension plan.

"With these changes, our most severely injured men and women are guaranteed an annual income of at least $61,800 a year," states the website.

Veterans Affairs also has a section on its website dedicated to homeless or at-risk veterans. The website provides information related to outreach and emergency services. Those who have served in the Canadian Armed Forces looking for help can call Veterans Affairs at 1-866-522-2122.

Frenette, who served 15 years in the Armed Forces as a peace-time soldier, says "one of the saddest cases I've seen" involved a now-deceased Niagara veteran.

The woman, who suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder, severe depression and alcoholism, sought help after she came home. While the help was there, it was far from an ideal situation for her, says Frenette.

"This lady had to go and sit in a car with four other guys. This woman had been raped in Bosnia while she was in the Armed Forces, she is dealing with that situation, now she has to drive with four men to London, as the only woman, and drive back here again, after the session.

"Could we not make arrangements to have somebody here in the Niagara Peninsula? Are we that poor that we can't make that arrangement for a veteran?"

Meanwhile, Frenette says legions across Niagara continue to work on getting a homeless shelter up and running for veterans.

A property is being looked at in Welland.

Legions don't pay for the bricks and mortar component of projects, but a central fund would help pay to maintain the shelter.

"I think we would probably get five to seven units through the legions that will be available. They're self-contained, it's like a motel room. It has to be a long-term facility because we don't know how long it's going to take for (homeless veterans to become self-reliant)," says Frenette.

"This place, if it ever comes about, will have a Veterans Affairs officer on premises and they will be able to get in touch with the professionals to help out — the psychiatrist, the doctors, we have people that have volunteered their services, an RN that will be able to tend to these peoples' needs as they come in."

Niagara Falls MP Rob Nicholson did not answer specific questions about the homeless veteran situation in Niagara.

Instead, Canada's defence minister provided a general e-mail statement.

"Veterans have made countless sacrifices and built our country into the proud, strong nation we are today. They are owed our respect and gratitude," reads the statement.

Through the federal government's Homelessness Partnering Strategy, homeless Canadians can get help and permanent housing, says Nicholson.

"Veterans projects are, of course, eligible under Homelessness Partnering Strategy, and we encourage interested organizations to contact their local community entity. Additionally, the Department of Veterans Affairs has many services and benefits tailored specifically to meet the needs of Canada's veterans."

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LOCALNEWS

■ STAT HOLIDAY

Legion leaders prefer Remembrance Day status quo

DON FRASER
QMI Agency Niagara

Keep Remembrance Day as an organized time of reflection for a younger generation.

Turning it into a paid statutory holiday in Ontario could dilute the seriousness of the event.

That's the view of two senior Niagara officers of the Royal Canadian Legion.

Both responded to a decision Tuesday by District School Board of Niagara trustees to send a letter to federal and provincial authorities urging the status quo for that day.

Trustee Dalt Clark and some other trustees said school war memorial gatherings and organized activities on Nov. 11 are an important part of the Remembrance Day experience for students.

"I don't believe that the children will show up at the cenotaph if it's a paid holiday," said Jack Gemmell, Niagara zone commander of the Royal Canadian Legion, adding various legions are already involved in many school programs.

"In the schools, they are getting the understanding of what it is all about and the need to remember the veterans," Gemmell said. "I fully feel they should be at school on Nov. 11."

Tom Townsley, legion Branch 24 president in St. Catharines, agrees.

"I would like to see it stay the way it is," said Townsley. "There are many programs we've been setting up with the schools ... if there's a school holiday, then a lot of these children are probably not going to show up (at services)."

Last week, New Democrat MP Dan Harris introduced a private member's bill in Ottawa that would make Remembrance Day a national statutory holiday. A second-reading vote on the bill has been passed by MPs and it is now in the committee stage.

The federal bill would amend the Holidays Act to treat Remembrance Day like other paid, national statutory holidays such as Canada Day.

Four provinces, including Ontario and Quebec, do not have Remembrance Day as a paid stat holiday, and it would be up to each province to enact any new statutory holiday legislation.

St. Catharines MP Rick Dykstra said he has worked with Harris on the bill and supports the principle of the bill.

Dykstra also notes provinces have jurisdiction over creating statutory holidays and paid days off work.

"Our view is changing this to a legal (federal) holiday is a symbolic, albeit strong gesture," he said.

"Provinces are not obliged, but should take into consideration ... any country-wide gesture."

The MP said he understands the DSBN trustees' point.

"But taking into account the education process leading up to Remembrance Day — and the potential of these children being able to attend the services independent of being at school — is something that needs to be considered," Dykstra said.

He said testimony during the heritage committee stage would be fully considered and could affect clause-by-clause bill recommendations.

Welland MP Malcolm Allen said he's essentially undecided on the issue.

"There are pluses to both sides of the argument. ... I'm willing to listen to folks on both sides of this issue," Allen said, adding students' participation on Nov. 11 isn't consistent across all schools.

"But it is also a valid concern as to what happens (to student involvement) if it's a stat holiday," he said.

Allen feels if a statutory holiday is declared, it should fall on whatever day Nov. 11 happens to be, rather than it becoming "just another paid holiday" that could be taken as a long weekend.

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CATHOLIC BOARD TRUSTEE WEIGHS IN

Kathy Burtnik, chair of Niagara Catholic District School Board, said options about Remembrance Day haven't been discussed at her board table.

Burtnik said she hasn't otherwise given too much thought to whether or not it should be a statutory holiday.

"Stat holidays sometimes lose their symbolism," she said.

"I like the status quo, where we can give it the reverence that it's due, leading up to and on Remembrance Day itself," she said.

JULIE JOCSAK/QMI AGENCY NIAGARA

Tom Townsley, president of Royal Canadian Legion Branch 24, weighs in on whether Remembrance Day should be made a statutory holiday.

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LOCALNEWS

IN BRIEF

Lake swimmers' names added to rock

An updated plaque in Niagara-on-the-Lake's Queen Victoria Park has been unveiled to include two new names: Trinity Arsenault and Colleen Shields, of Georgetown.

Affixed to a stone erected by Solo Swims of Ontario, a park monument is dedicated to individuals who have swum the 51-kilometre crossing of Lake Ontario.

The 14-year-old Arsenault joins a list of 56 swimming notables who have conquered the Great Lake, including Marilyn Bell, Vicki Keith, and her own mother, Christine Arsenault, who completed the feat in 2011.

Arsenault was swimmer No. 55 this past summer, going from Port Dalhousie to Marilyn Bell Park in Toronto in 22 hours and 19 minutes between Aug. 3 and 4.

Shields crossed Lake Ontario on Aug. 8 and 9, a week after Trinity's swim. She completed the 51-km trek in 21 hours and 33 minutes and is the oldest person on record to complete the swim at age 62.

On June 20, Arsenault swam Lake Erie at a distance of 19 kilometres from Sturgeon Point, N.Y., to Crystal Beach. in seven hours, 23 minutes and 16 seconds.

These two Great Lake feats made her the youngest person to swim Lake Ontario and Lake Erie, awarding her four World Records.

Arsenault was presented with two plaques by Solo Swims of Ontario in recognition of her accomplishments. Solo Swims of Ontario was formed in 1975 as the official governing body to ensure the safety of solo long distance swims in Ontario.

The World Open Water Association recently nominated Arsenault for Performance of the Year. On her swim, she endured thunderstorms and swam in 70 km/h winds amid 3.5-metre-tall waves.

See her profile and vote for her at: www.worldopenwater swimmingassociation.com/2014-wowsa-awards.

LOCALNEWS

■ NIAGARA FALLS

High-flying start to Winter Festival of Lights

QMI Agency Niagara

The thundering falls were overshadowed for a short while Saturday as a team of acrobats performed gravity-defying feats of balance and agility before an enthusiastic crowd to kick off the Ontario Power Generation Winter Festival of Lights.

"How do they do that?" asked Olivia Marcbese as the eight-year-old Niagara Falls girl watched in wonder as an acrobat swing from a hoop suspended above a stage.

"I'm good at gymnastics and even I can't do that."

Members of Zero Gravity Circus were the main attraction at the ceremony at Queen Victoria Park to mark the beginning of the 32nd annual festival.

"This is an added experience for us," said John Ngoc, of South Korea, who came across the ceremony while he and his wife were walking along the parkway to view the falls.

"It's amazing to see."

After the show, there was a Flip the Switcb ceremony to illuminate millions of tree and ground lights followed by a fireworks display over the falls.

"Every year, Niagara Falls is transformed into a magical landscape of snow, ice, thundering waters and beautiful lights," said Janice Thomson, chair of Niagara Parks Commission, one of the festival's founding partners.

She said the agency invested $300,000 this year on new lighting, programming and infrastructure to "support our winter plans and that of the festival well into future."

New this year is the addition of 13 Canadian wildlife illuminations and a seven-metre-tall illumination designed to resemble a water fountain at Dufferin Islands.

There is also a large illuminated water feature in the middle of the pond and the trees are lit in projection lighting that changes colours in sync with music.

The festival attracts 1.5 million visitors each year.

"The festival represents our collective efforts to promote and position Niagara as a tremendous major winter destination for visitors from around the world," Thomson said of the various agencies and businesses that are involved in the festival.

The Winter Festival of Lights has received a number of awards over the years including being named one of the World's Most Extravagant Christmas Light Displays by CNTraveler.com and an Ontario Event of Distinction by Festivals & Events Ontario.

QMI AGENCY NIAGARA

WINTER FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS

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■ Zero Gravity Circus at Queen Victoria Park: Shows run from 6 to 9 p.m. on Nov. 21, 22, 23, 28, 29; Dec. 5, 6, 12, 13, 19, 20, 21, 23, 24, and 26 through 29; and Jan. 2 to 4, and 9 to 11.

■ Fireworks over the Falls: Nov. 21, 28, Dec. 5, 12, 19, 22 to 26, 31, Jan. 2 and 9.

■ Screening Dec. 16 of *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* movie at the Ripley's Moving Theatre.

■ New Year's Eve Niagara Falls: Queen Victoria Park. Performers to be announced.

A full lineup of events can be found at www.wfol.com

QMI AGENCY NIAGARA

Members of Zero Gravity Circus were the main attraction at Queen Victoria Park on Saturday as the Ontario Power Generation Winter Festival of Lights kicked off its 32nd season.

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LOCALNEWS

■ #TRENDING

Niagara video-game industry expanding

They're like the last graduating class of a high school that has closed its doors.

When Silicon Knights closed three years ago, the hundred or so programmers and artists working at the St. Catharines video-game company's expansive 1 St. Paul St. office said goodbye and headed their separate ways.

But in tbe cycle of video-game development, three years is just long enough for those laid off employees to launch their own companies and start getting their first games off the ground.

A few hallways away from where Silicon Knigbts once stood tall as a pillar of the Canadian video-game industry, two newer companies — albeit much smaller — are now set to launch their own titles.

Rollers of the Realm, produced by Phantom Compass, goes on sale for the Sony Playstation 4 and other platforms Tuesday. Earlier this week, Sony announced it was picking up PixelNAUT's debut game, Lost Orbit, for the PS4 in early 2015.

Most of the employees for the two companies used to work with Silicon Knights, but the social network formed by the former company stretches much further.

"Being such a big company, you work with a lot of people and when something disintegrates like that, all of those people have to go somewhere," said PixelNAUTS co-founder Chris Iacobucci. "I feel like we know people in the industry not just in Ontario, but all over the world."

Ericka Evans, the head production for Phantom Compass, said video-game companies tend to work together more than other industries.

"My perspective is you can't look at anybody as your competition or you would have to look at everybody as your competition," she said. "There's so much to gain by working together, especially in building up the region."

PixelNAUTS has five employees while Phantom Compass has six in St. Catharines and another four working across southern Ontario. Unlike Silicon Knights, which took up three floors of 1 St. Paul St. at its peak, the two new companies have small, single-room office space inside Innovate Niagara's the Generator at One, a digital media business incubator. Also working from one of the Innovate Niagara offices is Creative Bytes, a year-old company building mobile app games.

"Some of our friends are a little bit bigger than us, but it changed a while back. It used to be tbat you had to have a 60- to 100-person team and a $15 million budget to produce games at $60 each," said Iacobucci.

Now, he said, there's a big market for games ranging from $1 up to $20.

"Once that market started to appear, it allowed small shops like us to exist," he said.

Games like Lost Orbit cost a few hundred thousand dollars to make and digital media funding through the Ontario government covers about half the amount if everyone hired to work on the project is living in tbe province.

It has allowed the local video-game market to explode.

"It's bringing a lot of jobs here, too, so it's pretty amazing," Golebiowski said of the funding.

Evans said Rollers of the Realm started out as a "portfolio project" to help 20 or so former Silicon Knights employees show the type of work they were capable of.

But the project took off and got funded to make it a more widely-released game.

"It's definitely tbe biggest project that we've worked on with the most people and the biggest budget," Evans said.

She said the fact two game studios in St. Catharines are releasing games around the same time is a "positive sign."

"It shows there is a talent and there's a place for it to be fostered," she said.

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LOCALNEWS

■ NATHAN CHAMBERLAND

Composer fine tunes Winter Festival of Lights

JOHN LAW
QMI Agency Niagara

You're going to hear a lot of Niagara Falls composer Nathan Chamberland at the upcoming Winter Festival of Lights. Over and over again.

An eight and a half minute score Chamberland wrote will he matched with the light displays at Dufferin Islands, giving the park a musical component to go with several new attractions.

Chamberland, a veteran musician who ran the Niagara Music Awards for two years, says his name was suggested to festival organizers who were looking for a local artist to create the score.

"They wanted to hire a Niagara Falls resident instead of going somewhere else," he says. "They contacted me and said, 'Would you suhmit some stuff?' I did, and they said, 'This is great, could you compose eight and a half minutes worth of music?'"

Chamberland is no stranger to wintery music. Three years ago, he contrihuted the cheeky holiday tune *About Christmas* to a Canadian compilation CD. He also scored the sound track to the made-in-Niagara series *History of a Haunting*.

"It's kind of my hag," he says.

Before he started, Chamberland watched hours of the Trans Siherian Orchestra, and realized "I can't do eight and a half minutes of '80s hair metal."

Instead, he created a traditional score — with elements of some classic tunes — with the occasional "pop" so the lights can do their thing.

The key, he said, was to pace things so it's not all hig moments. "You can't have good music that punches from heginning to end."

The music will repeat on a loop throughout the festival, which started Nov. 15 and runs to Jan. 2.

Chamberland also created a three-minute score for opening night at Queen Victoria Park. For years, John Williams' Superman score accompanied the moment the switch was thrown.

Chamherland is essentially replacing his hero. Growing up, the legendary composer's scores for *Jaws, Star Wars* and other classics inspired him to create his own music.

Now, he gets the hig moment during a year of huge changes for the 32-year-old festival. On opening night, he'll he in the park with his wife and two kid, listening to his music kick things off.

"Not many people can say they did that."

john.law@sunmedia.ca

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■ THEATRE: New shows in Niagara

Festive musical, French farce playing in Niagara

JOHN LAW
QMI Agency Niagara

Winter's chill has arrived, which means Niagara theatre is warming up.

Two new shows opened last weekend, hringing some holiday cheer and a French farce to stages.

In St. Catharines, Garden City Productions wraps up its 2014 season with Irving Berlin's *White Christmas*. The stage version of the 1954 movie opened in 2004, and while it wasn't a critical favourite (the *New York Times'* Charles Isherwood said it was as fresh as a "roll of Necco wafers found in a mothhalled Christmas stocking"), it has heen a seasonal hit on tour.

But it's not solely a Christmas show, says director and choreographer Wendy Leard. In fact, *White Christmas* is ahout the only well-known holiday tune in it.

"It contains some of Irving Berlin's hest music," she says. "*Blue Skies, I Love a Piano, Love You Didn't Do Right By Me* ... I think *White Christmas* is the only Christmas song in the show."

Don't expect a hunch of cheesy carols pandering to the crowd. The musical sticks to the film's story ahout two Second World War army huddies who perform in nightcluhs after the war, and the two sisters who eventually perform with them.

"It's not a show ahout Christmas," says Leard. "It's a show ahout people helping people, ahout love."

The film was hased on the 1942 musical *Holiday Inn*, which is actually where Bing Croshy's song *White Christmas* first appeared.

The Garden City Productions version, which opened Saturday, stars Dean Christopher, Lynn Farquharson, Ian Harte and Samantha Marchionda. The full 33-memher cast is joined hy a 16-piece orchestra.

It is the first Garden City show since the death of longtime company director Diane Nyland Proctor in Octoher.

"She was a major part of Garden City Productions for a long time. When we went to her memorial in Toronto, it was a hit of a GCP reunion."

Meanwhile down the QEW, Garrison Little Theatre in Fort Erie launched its 29th season with Marc Camoletti's spirited French farce *Boeing Boeing*.

Listed in the Guinness Book of Records as the world's most-performed French play, it opened in London's West End in 1962 and has heen an enduring hit ever since.

Director Derek Joynes had heen itching to hring the show to Fort Erie for two years, hut the rights weren't availahle.

"Once word got out that it had heen revived and modernized to some extent, we thought it would he the right sort of thing for us to do," says Joynes, who performed in the comedy in Georgetown in the early 1970s.

The fast-paced show follows an American architect juggling three fiancées at once, all of them flight attendants with different airlines. But when a new high-tech Boeing messes with his schedule, all three women are in town, in the same apartment.

"We find with dinner theatre, once somehody's had a full meal and hottle of wine, they don't want anything too serious," says Joynes. "They want to he entertained, and that's really what we do."

The show stars Garrison regulars Darka Makarec, James Reid and Lily Grouix along with newcomers Bruce Davenport, Edie Pederson and Margaret Gleeson.

john.law@sunmedia.ca

SPECIAL TO NIAGARA FALLS REVIEW

Garrison Little Theatre serves up the classic French farce Boeing Boeing, starting Friday night in Fort Erie.

BOEING BOEING

WHERE: Italo-Canadian Club, 1101 DiPietro St., Fort Erie
WHEN: Until Nov. 22
TICKETS: $35 with dinner, matinee $24.50. 905-991-8181 or www.garrisonlittletheatre.com

WHITE CHRISTMAS

WHERE: Ridley College Mandeville Theatre, 2 Ridley Rd., St. Catharines
WHEN: Until Nov. 30
TICKETS: $28 adults, $23 students. 905-682-1353 or www.gcp.ca

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IN BRIEF

Pelham food drive planned for Dec. 6

The town of Pelham is getting set for its annual food drive.

As part of the Christmas in Pelham weekend, the 23rd annual Pelham Community Food Drive will be held Dec. 6 starting at 9:30 a.m.

Residents in the urban areas of the town can put non-perishable food on their porch for pickup by a small army of volunteers. Anyone wanting to make a financial donation can put cash or a cheque made out to Pelham Cares in an envelope and give it to the volunteer collecting food.

Rural Pelham residents can drop food off after Dec. 6 at Century 21 Today Realty, Clare's Cycle and Sports, Meridian Credit Union, North Pelham Avondale, Star Tile Centre and the Pelham Cares office.

Organizers are also looking for volunteers to collect food for the drive. Anyone who wants to help out should contact Gerry Berkhout at 905-892-6988 or galves@cogeco.ca.

Volunteers who want to help sort food should contact Pelham Cares at 905-892-5300 or info@pelhamcares.org.

Niagara Regional Police Service

Gun Amnesty Event 2014
November 26 – 29, 2014

Surrender all unwanted guns or ammunition to the Niagara Regional Police Service.

The NRPS PAVIS Unit is conducting a gun amnesty event from November 26 to 29, 2014. The goal is to gather all unwanted ammunition, handguns, rifles, air guns or replica guns off the streets of Niagara.

For information and pickup please contact:

NRPS PAVIS Unit
289-407-2634

PAVIS

The NRPS PAVIS Unit is funded by the Ministry of Community Safety & Correctional Services Ontario with a goal towards keeping Niagara streets safe from violence, gun and gang activity.

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SCOOTER SAFETY

Mobility scooters offer the ability to travel great distances that are not usually within walking distance. They can help you move around your home, neighbourhood and inside stores. However they can be dangerous if not used safely.

Follow these tips before you head out so you can get safely from home to your destination. Read the instruction manual upon purchase so you know the safety features and controls on your new scooter. Read the tips that are given for navigating bumps, curves and uneven ground. Some heavy duty scooters are designed for rough terrain. Learning to drive your scooter in a safe area such as a parking lot or driveway is always recommended to learn how your scooter manoeuvers in all weather. Having confidence will make it a safer experience for you and others around you.

Some basic scooter tips include:

- Use sidewalks whenever possible. If no sidewalks exist, travel on the far left side of the road facing traffic.
- Cross at pedestrian crosswalks. Check for traffic before crossing.
- Make "eye contact "with motorists or pedestrians before crossing to make sure they are stopping.
- Obey all traffic control signs and devices.
- Slow down when travelling around pedestrians and avoid travelling too closely.
- Keep to the right on sidewalks and avoid honking your horn.
- Drive your scooter straight at a ramp. Most scooters have anti tip wheels to keep them from tipping when doing angled manoeuvres.
- Your scooter should have a safety flag, reflectors and lights in the front and back so you can be seen at all times.
- Wearing a reflective safety vest is also a good idea and is essential if you have to travel at night.
- Carry a cell phone and have your emergency contact information taped onto your scooter so it is easy to find.

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LOCALNEWS

■ EDUCATION

DAN DAKIN/STAFF PHOTO

Niagara College researcher Costa Aza shows Reza Moridi, who is both Ontario's minister of training, colleges and universities and minister of research and innovation, how to use a digital scanning machine at the school's advanced manufacturing innovation centre in Welland Wednesday.

Niagara College gets $4.2M for innovation centre expansion

DAN DAKIN
QMI Agency Niagara

Niagara College's research and innovation centre is about to get even more innovative.

The school was given a $4.2-million grant from the provincial government last Wednesday to build a 1,350-square-metre (15,000-square-foot) expansion at its Rankin Technology Centre in Welland.

The new space will be a permanent facility for the school's advanced manufacturing innovation centre, which provides research and development for Niagara businesses that may not otherwise be able to access it.

"The nature of advance manufacturing requires we have state-of-the-art facilities with high-tech equipment that local small- and medium-sized enterprises can access," said the school's president, Dan Patterson.

"This funding will allow us to build a facility that is designed from the view of 'how can we stimulate more jobs and attract more companies to set up in the Niagara region, and in particular in Welland?'"

The funding announcement was made by Reza Moridi, who is both Ontario's minister of training, colleges and universities and minister of research and innovation.

"It's good to see Niagara College is acting as a link between academia and industry. That's what the government is encouraging," he said.

Moridi said the collaboration with private industry helps the economy, while also providing students with real-world training and connections that can lead to jobs after graduation.

Patterson agreed.

"Not only are we providing a highly-skilled workforce, but we're saying we can be the research and development arm of small- and medium-sized companies to allow them to be competitive," he said.

Construction on the expansion is expected to start in the spring and the goal is to have it ready for use by the fall of 2016. This will be the fourth expansion of the Rankin Technology Centre since it was built in 1998. The last major renovation took place in 2011, when an additional 1,902 square metres (21,137 square feet) was added.

dan.dakin@sunmedia.ca
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LOCALNEWS

■ INDUSTRIAL WIND TURBINES

Green energy project gets the green light

Niagara Region Wind Corp. to proceed with 77 towers

DAN DAKIN
QMI Agency Niagara

The company planning to build one of Canada's largest industrial wind turbine farms in Niagara has been given the approval to move forward.

Niagara Region Wind Corp. said last Wednesday it is on track to build its 77-turbine wind farm in Niagara region and Haldimand county, after the Ministry of the Environment issued its Renewable Energy Approval the previous week.

The turbines being installed — the majority to be located in West Lincoln — are some of the largest available at three megawatts each. The total development has a capacity of 230 MW, enough to power 70,000 homes and make it the fifth-largest wind farm in North America.

"The is confirmation of all the work we've done over the past seven and a half years," said Merv Croghan, CEO of NRWC.

But while the REA is one big hurdle, the private company is still a number of steps away from being able to start construction.

"We're moving forward with our very detailed construction design plans," Croghan said. "We're getting into the real micro detailing of the project."

NRWC is now in a 15-day holding period during which the public can submit objections on the REA approval. A panel would then decide if the approval should be heard before an environmental review tribunal, similar to an appeals court, to which the company would have to argue its case to move forward with the project.

At least one group, Mothers Against Wind Turbines, confirmed it plans to appeal.

"The reason for the appeal is to protect children and families in our communities against the wind turbine emissions," said Linda Rogers, who sits on the Mothers Against Wind Turbines board.

In an NRWC news release, Croghan said the project would create more than 700 jobs during construction and that more than $130 million would be spent locally.

After the company issued its release, Niagara West–Glanbrook MPP Tim Hudak, who has publicly opposed the project, said he would continue to fight against the Green Energy Act and the turbine developments it allows.

"I'm going to keep fighting this project," he said in an e-mail to QMI Agency Niagara. "It is not in the interest of local residents to have among the tallest wind farms forced into their backyards with no local say, nor does it help seniors, families and businesses who are now paying among the most expensive hydro bills in North America."

Hudak said he has proposed a moratorium on the development of "any more heavily-subsidized wind energy projects" as part of a bigger affordable energy plan.

West Lincoln Mayor Doug Joyner was also disappointed to hear the project got its REA.

"Regardless of what position you have on wind farms, many West Lincoln residents, and many Ontario residents, still believe that the action of the provincial government to take away the rights of municipalities through the Green Energy Act is very disappointing and fundamentally wrong," he said, adding that West Lincoln has declared itself an "unwilling host" to industrial wind farms.

"Council and many residents truly believe that (wind) farms should be directed to willing host communities," he said.

Joyner called the combination of the REA approval and last week's Health Canada study effectively backing the argument of the wind turbine developers a "double whammy."

But Croghan said he sees the Health Canada report as confirmation of its own studies.

"It should be more confirmation for the public that a third party did studies. They should feel comfortable knowing that what we've said in our REA and what the MOE has approved, is factual," he said.

Rogers, however, said that study doesn't tell the whole story.

"The study is not complete. What has been issues are preliminary statements. There is a lot of criticism about those statements," she said. "The (NRWC) project as currently approved will cause harm. The main mechanism will be noise. These are some of the largest wind turbines that have been sited in Ontario. The government knows there's a problem. A big problem."

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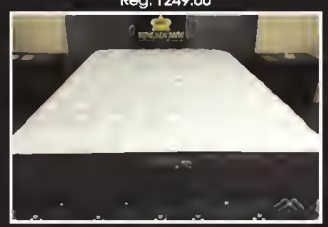

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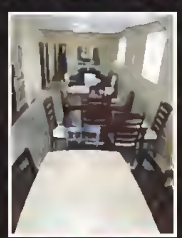

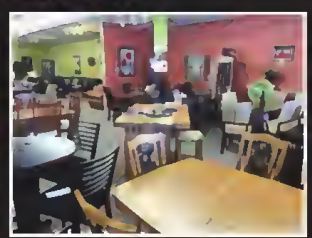

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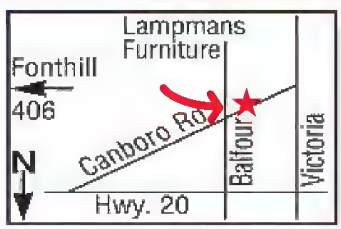

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ONTARIO JUNIOR CITIZEN OF THE YEAR AWARDS

DONORS: Rudi Kroeker is president of Whiting Equipment Canada

Welland businessman pledges $1 million to Brock University

QMI Agency Niagara

Welland businessman Rudi Kroeker and his family are donating $1 million toward Brock University's Cairns Family Health and Bioscience Research Complex.

Kroeker, president and CEO of Whiting Equipment Canada Inc., a designer and manufacturers of heavy industrial equipment, and his wife Yvette made their pledge through a gift of life insurance.

In recognition of their years of service to Brock, a news release said, the Cairns Complex atrium will be named the H.-Rudi Kroeker Family Atrium for the life of the building.

"My family and I are extremely pleased to be supporters of Brock University," Kroeker said. "We sincerely hope that the support we've provided to this faculty will allow faculty, staff, students and entrepreneurs to excel in their fields, and pursue their research dreams — for all of our benefits."

Kroeker served on the university's board of trustees from 2001 to 2014, including three years as chair. It was during his time at the helm that the school broke ground for the Cairns Complex, in September 2009.

Kroeker is also chairman and CEO of Handling Specialty in Grimsby, oversees Whiting Transportation Corp. of Niagara Falls, N.Y., and Whiting Equipment Services Co. Ltd. He is chairman and CEO of Zhejiang NAMAG Equipment Manufacturing Co. Ltd. in Tongxiang, P.R. China, and director of Swenson Technology Inc. in Monee, Ill.

"He has witnessed the workings of our institution first hand, and he is a believer when it comes to supporting students, innovation and community partnerships," Brock president Jack Lightstone said.

"This gift to the university will create a lasting legacy at Brock that will have a significant impact on faculty, staff and students in the many years to come."

The $112-million Cairns Complex opened in 2012 houses 15,840 square metres of labs, purpose-built teaching and research space and cutting-edge facilities. It is home to leading Brock researchers in biotechnology, green chemistry, plant pathology and health and wellness. The facility also houses BioLinc, a business incubator to support startup businesses and innovative research.

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LOCALNEWS

■ **BOOKS:** You Gotta Eat Here Too! profiles Port Colborne restaurant

Readers could be hungering for Smokin' Buddha

GREG FURMINGER
QMI Agency Niagara

When a Port Colborne restaurant made its TV debut last year, viewers ate it up.

Foodies started to crave The Smokin' Buddha after it was featured last year on You Gotta Eat Here!

Food Network Canada star John Catucci and his crew filmed for episode of *You Gotta Eat Here!* in the summer of 2012. The segment was first aired May 2013 in Season 2 Episode 25 and profiled the restaurant's peanut curry, Korean beef noodles, lamb pops and mango salad.

Things could pick up again for owner Kevin Ecblin Echlin and his staff. The restaurant occupying the old train station off King St. is getting more mention in Catucci's latest book, *You Gotta Eat Here Too! More of Canada's Favourite Hometown Restaurants and Hidden Gems* (Harper Collins Canada; ISBN: 9781443429481, $24.99).

A presser dished out by the publishing company says in his latest read, penned with Michael Vlessides, Catucci continues his quest to find one-of-a-kind hidden treasures and mouthwatering dishes from across Canada. In *You Gotta Eat Here Too!* Catucci discovers the characters behind neighbourhood institutions, and what makes each restaurant and their signature food so great.

The *You Gotta Eat Here!* episode featuring The Smokin' Buddha can be viewed on the foodnetwork.ca website here: http://bit.ly/1va8ZBc.

greg.furminger@sunmedia.ca
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LOCALNEWS

INDUSTRY: Canadian band teams with Stoney Ridge winery for new product

Tragically Hip, Niagara business in wine duet

DON FRASER
QMI Agency Niagara

The Tragically Hip hope their new VQA brand will hit all the right notes for wine lovers.

This month, a limited edition wine was launched to celebrate their landmark *Fully Completely* album, released in 1992.

The label of the same name is a collaboration with Stoney Ridge Estate Winery in Vineland for a premium grand reserve red wine.

Its release commemorates the Canadian band's announcement of the re-release of *Fully Completely* and a 2015 North American tour that will include a stop in St. Catharines.

Stoney Ridge Estate Winery president Barry Katzman said the partnership started with a call from the band's manager, Bernie Green, about a year ago.

"They were looking at things they could do in conjunction with the re-release and the tour," said Katzman.

"And then they then thought about a wine ... and were looking for a mid-sized winery that could handle some volume but still have a high-end boutique feel to it," he said.

Stoney Ridge itself was founded in 1985 and purchased in 2013 by Canadian TV and radio broadcaster Bob McCown of the Fan 590 and Sportsnet. Katzman said that helped speed up the collaboration.

The wine was co-created by band members Gord Downie, Paul Langlois, Rob Baker, Gord Sinclair and Johnny Fay, along with Stoney Ridge head winemaker Jeff Hundertmark.

"The guys are wine aficionados," said Katzman. "They're collectors, wine drinkers, and have watched with interest as the Ontario and Niagara industry has grown," he said.

The blend of Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Cabernet Franc comes from the 2012 vintage and is a Bordeaux-style reserve red that sells for $25 a bottle.

The bottle label also features a replication of the striking artwork that appeared on the *Fully Completely* album cover.

"In just 24 hours, we've been inundated by sales," Katzman said. "I've been in many of these types of launches and never seen anything like this. We've already sold more than 2,400 bottles."

PHOTO SPECIAL TO QMI AGENCY NIAGARA

Members of the band Tragically Hip with their new wine "Fully Completely" produced in conjunction with Stoney Ridge Estate Winery in Vineland.

The wine will be available at Stoney Ridge's retail store in Vineland, direct to Ontario bars and restaurants, and via online sales through the band's website thehip.com or stoneyridge.com.

Distribution negotiations are underway with the LBCO and other provincial liquor authorities.

don.fraser@sunmedia.ca

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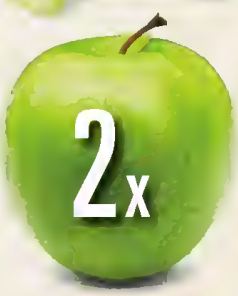
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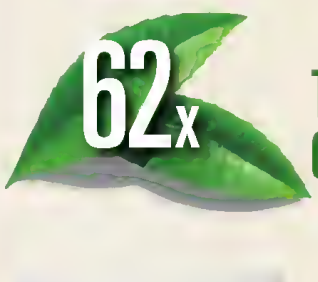
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Florentine

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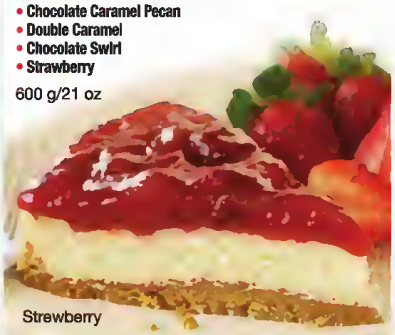

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